



Ramsgate Town Council

Emergency Communications Procedure

Adopted	14th June 2023
Due to review	As required

An emergency communication procedure is a critical document that guides how a council communicates during emergency situations.

Purpose

The purpose of the emergency communication procedure is to ensure that Ramsgate Town Council can effectively communicate with the public, media, and other stakeholders during an emergency.

Objectives

The objectives of the emergency communication procedure are to:

- Provide accurate and timely information to the public and media.
- Ensure consistency in messaging and communication channels.
- Establish clear lines of communication within the council and with external partners.
- Protect the council's reputation and credibility.
- Provide guidance on the use of social media and other communication technologies during an emergency.

Scope

The emergency communication procedure applies to all council employees, councillors, and contractors involved in emergency response and communication.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

- The Town Clerk or designated emergency management coordinator is responsible for coordinating the council's emergency communication efforts.
- The Marketing and Communications Officer is responsible for developing and implementing the emergency communication plan and ensuring that messaging is consistent and accurate.
- The Emergency Communications Team is responsible for communicating with the public, media, and other stakeholders during an emergency situation.

- All council employees are responsible for following the council's emergency communication procedures.

Communication Channels

The council will use a variety of communication channels to distribute information during an emergency situation. These channels may include:

- Media releases
- Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)
- Website updates
- Public information lines
- Radio broadcasts
- Public meetings

Emergency Communications Plan and Team

The council will develop an emergency communications plan that outlines the specific communication procedures and messaging for different emergency situations. This plan will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that it remains current and effective.

The council will establish an emergency communications team that includes key staff members and external partners. This team will be responsible for coordinating communication efforts during an emergency situation.

Coordination with External Partners

The council will coordinate with external partners, including other levels of government, emergency services, and community organisations, to ensure that messaging is consistent and coordinated.

Messaging

All messaging must be consistent and accurate. The council will provide regular updates on the situation, including:

- The nature of the emergency.
- The council's response.
- Any actions the public should take.
- Any updates on the situation.

Media Relations and Monitoring

Ramsgate Town Council will establish clear lines of communication with the media during an emergency. All media inquiries will be directed to the Marketing and Communications Officer or designated spokesperson. The council will provide regular media briefings and updates as needed.

The council will monitor media coverage during an emergency situation to ensure that messaging remains consistent and accurate. This will also help the council to identify any misinformation or rumours that need to be addressed.

Social Media

The council recognises the importance of social media during an emergency situation. The council will use social media to distribute information and engage with the public. All social media messaging must be consistent with the council's overall messaging. Only official channels of social media should be used in the instance of the emergency.

Training

The council will provide regular training to employees and councillors on the emergency communication procedure. This training will ensure that all staff members are aware of their roles and responsibilities during an emergency situation and are familiar with the communication channels and messaging guidelines.

Accessibility and Privacy

The council will ensure that all communication channels and messaging are accessible to all members of the public, including those with disabilities and those who speak languages other than English.

The council will ensure that all personal information collected during an emergency situation is handled in accordance with GDPR legislation and follows best practices.

Post-Emergency Communication

The council will develop a post-emergency communication plan to inform the public of the council's response to the emergency situation, any ongoing risks and hazards, and recovery efforts. This may include educational materials, potential follow up public meetings, and other outreach efforts.

This plan will also provide an opportunity for the council to gather feedback from the public on its communication efforts.

Evaluation and Review

The council will evaluate the effectiveness of the emergency communication procedure following an emergency situation. The evaluation will include a review of the council's communication efforts, messaging, and use of communication channels.

The emergency communication procedure will be reviewed and updated as needed, at least once per year.

By implementing this emergency communication procedure, the council will be better equipped to effectively communicate with the public, media, and other stakeholders during an emergency situation, ultimately contributing to a safer and more informed community.